

Taxing Times

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Read about taxpayers with IRS problems and learn helpful tips on how to end them.



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MICHAEL AVENATTI SENTENCED TO PRISON

The pugilistic lawyer who became famous will spend the next 14 years in federal prison.

Michael Avenatti, who became a household name for representing porn actress Stormy Daniels in her case against President Donald Trump, was sentenced to 14 years in prison for stealing millions of dollars from his clients and obstructing IRS efforts to collect more than \$3 million in payroll taxes from a coffee business he owned.

Avenatti, 51, of Newport Beach, California, was also ordered to pay more than \$10 million in restitution to four clients and the IRS.

"Michael Avenatti was a corrupt lawyer who claimed he was fighting for the little guy. In fact, he only cared about his own selfish interests," United States Attorney Martin Estrada said in a statement. "He stole millions of dollars from his clients — all to finance his extravagant lifestyle that included a private jet and race cars."

At one point, Avenatti was a regular guest on cable news and had been discussed as possible 2020 presidential candidate.

MAN USED 'ZAPPER' TO REDUCE TAXABLE INCOME

A part owner of several restaurants in Connecticut and Massachusetts was sentenced to 18 months in prison for operating an extensive tax fraud scheme.

According to court records, William Chen, 49, of West Hartford, Connecticut, activated "zapper" software on the point-of-sale system for the restaurants.

The software deletes transactions from the system to create fraudulent sales records.

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As a result, Chen intentionally suppressed the restaurants' taxable income that he disclosed to his accountant who prepared his and his restaurants' income tax returns.

The tax loss attributable to Chen's criminal conduct is more than \$2 million. ■

MAN FACES UP TO FIVE YEARS IN PRISON FOR TAX CASE

A California man pleaded guilty to failing to pay more than \$200,000 for one three-month period's payroll taxes that were owed by a staffing company.

Robinson Rin Yang, 54, pleaded guilty to one count of willful failure to pay over employment taxes.

According to court records, Yang operated B&S Staffing, a staffing service business. From mid-2017 until the end of 2019, B&S accrued large unpaid employment tax liabilities, failed to make timely employment tax deposits, and repeatedly failed to timely file quarterly employment tax returns with the IRS. Notably, B&S did not file, until February 2019, employment tax returns for the periods ending June 30, 2017 through December 31, 2018.

He faces up to five years in prison. ■

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WOMAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR WIRE FRAUD, FILING FALSE RETURNS

She took money from bank accounts she was managing and did not report the income to IRS.

A Colorado woman was sentenced to 37 months in prison and ordered to pay \$410,889 in restitution for wire fraud and filing false tax returns.

According to court records, Debra Campbell, 66, of Grand Junction, Colorado, owned and operated a company that managed the finances of homeowners' associations (HOAs).

Starting in March 2015, Campbell began making unauthorized transfers to her bank accounts from some HOA bank accounts and used that money for her personal expenses. Campbell selected HOAs whose boards did not monitor their bank accounts or finances.

In order conceal and perpetuate her theft, Campbell regularly altered HOA

bank statements, so they did not reflect the unauthorized transfers and falsely reflected a higher balance than actually existed in the account. In this manner, between March 2015 and April 2018, Campbell stole more than \$250,000 from 23 of her client HOAs.

Campbell also failed to include the income gained from her scheme on her 2014-2017 tax returns, substantially underreporting her income and resulting in a tax loss to the federal government of more than \$150,000.

Campbell was also ordered to serve three years of supervised release. ■

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ABOUT THE OFFER IN COMPROMISE

Did you know it's possible to settle your debt with the Internal Revenue Service for less than the IRS says you owe?

If you owe a substantial amount in back taxes to the government, you may be eligible to participate in the Offer in Compromise program. This program allows you to make an offer to the IRS that could settle your tax debt for significantly less than you owe.

Call to learn more about this program.

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ABOUT THE INSTALLMENT AGREEMENT

Are you earning a good living but just unable to pay your back taxes? The Installment Agreement may be the option.

The Installment Agreement allows taxpayers to pay their tax debt over time by making manageable payments. The Installment Agreement can put you back in control of your financial future.

Call to learn more about this program.

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TOWING COMPANY OWNER GETS 15 MONTHS

He admitted that he owed more than \$130,000 in taxes.

The owner of a South Florida towing company was sentenced to 15 months in prison after pleading guilty to three counts of tax evasion.

According to court records, Craig Goldstein, 60, of Boca Raton, Florida, was an owner of West Way Towing, a company that towed and stored disabled vehicles, including ones involved in accidents.

Goldstein referred accident victims to attorneys and chiropractors who would then illegally charge insurance companies for unneeded services under Florida's Personal Injury Protection program. Goldstein charged a fee for each referral, which he collected in cash and failed to report to the IRS.

Goldstein also failed to report cash he received from vehicle storage lien fees and vehicle auctions, the sales prices of which were manipulated to reflect falsely that he made no profit. Goldstein admitted owing the U.S. government more than \$130,000 in income tax.

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INVESTMENT ADVISOR PLEADS GUILTY IN TAX

An investment advisor pleaded guilty to tax charges.

financial services company, Clapboard Hill Advisors.

Thomas Pacilio, 64, of Westport, Connecticut, admitted that, for the 2015 through 2018 tax years, he filed individual income tax returns that omitted installment payments he received from the sale of his fi-

Pacilio omitted more than \$1.4 million that should have been reported either as ordinary income or as capital gains, which resulted in a tax loss of \$286,328 to the IRS. He faces up to three years in prison.



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Constantly thinking about how much money you owe the Internal Revenue Service? Always worried that you'll never be able to get out from under this crushing debt? Wondering what effect this debt will have on your future and the future of your family? You're not the only one. Every day, I work with clients to solve tax problems they believe are unsolvable. I'm a member of the American Society of Tax Problem Solvers, and I am part of the rescue squad for troubled taxpayers.

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Our dedication to the principles of professionalism & responsiveness has resulted in our guarantee to:

1. Explore alternative solutions to client tax problems.
2. Select the solution we believe is in our client's best interest.
3. Explain our decision to clients, and
4. Aggressively pursue the solution decided upon.

We further guarantee to:

1. Return client calls in a timely fashion.
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3. Treat every client with respect, and
4. Work every case like it was our own.

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